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(Washington, DC) - Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-3) applauds President Barack Obama's announcement that the General Services Administration (GSA) will accelerate its purchase of new cars for the government fleet by investing funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to buy about 17,600 new, fuel efficient vehicles produced by American auto companies by June 1, 2009.

"As Americans hope for the success of our struggling auto industry I am pleased with President Barack Obama's decision to accelerate using Recovery funds to modernize the government fleet of fuel-efficient automobiles," said Congressman Carnahan.

On March 30th, President Obama directed his administration to speed up the purchase of these vehicles to increase demand for American auto companies during these difficult economic times. The GSA moved faster than any time in its history to launch this aggressive fleet purchase strategy. By purchasing fuel efficient vehicles from American automakers over the next two months, this move will help stimulate the economy, support the auto industry, and achieve energy-efficiency goals.

"The American auto industry has been warned that it must find ways to cut their debt and restructure their companies for success for a new clean-energy world economy," said Carnahan.

The GSA will spend \$285 million of Recovery Act funds to purchase about 17,600 commercially available fuel efficient vehicles for the government fleet before June 1, 2009 including 2,500 hybrid sedans to be purchased by April 15 (the largest one-time purchase of hybrid vehicles in U.S. history). All purchases will be made from manufacturers with an existing contract with the GSA, which are General Motors, Chrysler and Ford.

"I am confident that through hard work, sacrifice and time America will once again become the leader in automobile manufacturing and that's why I applaud today's decision to help boost the American auto industry. Now leaders of the company, with the help of the hardworking factory employees, must ensure the industry's future success," said Congressman Carnahan.

Each vehicle purchased under the GSA's accelerated strategy must have a higher miles-per-gallon rating than the vehicle it replaces with the overall goal of at least a 10 percent increase in fuel-efficiency for the entire procurement.

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